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John C. Tormey
Providence, R.I.

ELIZABETH SETON: An American Woman.
By Leonard Feeney.
Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 304 *pp.*, $3.50 (*paper*).

In a lively, intimate style this book presents the life of Elizabeth Seton in a down-to-earth manner that raises everyday living to the realms of sainthood. The author weaves the story from the personal diary and letters she had written to her close friends and relatives. He tells us of her early childhood days, the close spiritual relationship between a busy doctor father and his favorite daughter and her somewhat discouraging life as a Protestant: "There was a cast of holiness in her character from the beginning. She had a precociousness in the ways of the spirit, operating as it did only in the twilight of Christian truth. She was a bewildered little moth, always searching for the flame, not sure where it was, but terribly sure *that* it was." Her exceptional beauty and mental accomplishments made her the most sought-after debutante of New York and she cared little for the social life. He tells of her marriage to William Seton, their love and her courageous, sacrificing role as a wife who spent thirty days in a dungeon with her sick husband, her almost impossible task of a widow trying to raise five children with no income, her embarking on a life as a Catholic, disowned and disgraced by all her friends and relatives, and lastly, her life as a nun who in the jaws of poverty, wasting away with weariness and disease was the leading vanguard of the Catholic Sisterhood in America, the Sisters of Charity. She is our first native-born saint, an American girl who "made good" according to God's exact standards.

Leonard Feeney interspersing her biography with his own enlightening comments adds much to the telling of her life. He brings flesh and blood to her character in a way that makes it easy to identify one's own self. When you are finished reading the book you will have many points of wisdom and thoughts to ponder in the concrete examples of her life.

Mujana Darian
Arnold, Mo.

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